

Rhetorical Strategies and the Dynamics of Persuasion in 12 Angry Men

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Abstract

This study examines the rhetorical strategies employed specifically by juror 8 in 12 Angry Men movie to persuade and influence the other 11 jurors during jury deliberations. It aims to explore the effectiveness of Juror 8's methodological approach in persuading the jury to change their verdict, examining the structure of each argument presented and their overlapping with the rhetorical strategies of logos, ethos, and pathos. It aims to show how the shift in the group's collective opinion from guilty verdict to a not guilty decision is made. The study hypothesizes that Juror 8's successful utilization of logical reasoning, emotional appeal, and credibility plays a central role in altering the jury's perspective. Additionally, it suggests that while juror 8 relies sometimes on emotional appeals, it is the sustained and rational discourse presented by a trustworthy character that ultimately drives the change. The research is going to employ argumentation theory (particularly the Toulmin Model and Aristotle's Rhetorical theory) to analyze how juror 8 constructs his position and defends justice.

Keywords: 12 Angry Men, Toulmin, persuasion, rhetorical, strategy

استراتيجيات البلاغة وديناميكيات الإقناع في فيلم 12 رجلاً غاضباً
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المستخلص

تتناول هذه الدراسة استراتيجيات البلاغة التي استخدمها عضو هيئة المحلفين رقم 8 في الفلم المعروف 12 رجلاً غاضباً كوسيلة إقناع باقي الأعضاء الاحدى عشر خلال مداوالات هيئة المحلفين. تهدف الدراسة إلى تحليل فعالية النهج المنهجي الذي اتبعه عضو هيئة المحلفين رقم 8 أثناء إقناع هيئة المحلفين لتغيير حكمهم، كذلك تهدف الدراسة إلى استكشاف هيكل كل حجة تم تقديمها وبيان تداخلها مع استراتيجيات البلاغة الخاصة بالمنطق (logos) والاخلاقيات (ethos) والعاطفة (pathos). وتهدف الدراسة أيضاً إلى توضيح كيفية التغيير الكلي في الرأي للمجموعة من حكم بالإدانة إلى حكم بالبراءة. تفترض الدراسة أن الاستخدام الناجح للمنطق والاستدلال العاطفي والمصادقية من قبل عضو هيئة المحلفين رقم 8 يلعب دوراً مركزياً في تغيير وجهة نظر هيئة المحلفين. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، تشير الدراسة إلى أنه في حين يعتمد عضو هيئة المحلفين رقم 8 أحياناً على الاستمالات العاطفية، إلا أن الخطاب العقلاني المستمر المقدم من شخصية موثوقة كالتي بينها للجميع في ذاته هو الذي يدفع في النهاية إلى التغيير. اعتمدت الدراسة على نظرية الحجاج (خاصة نموذج تولمن ونظرية البلاغة لأرسطو) لتحليل كيفية بناء عضو هيئة المحلفين رقم 8 لموقفه والدفاع عن العدالة

الكلمات المفتاحية: 12 رجلاً غاضباً، تولمن، الإقناع، البلاغة، استراتيجية

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Introduction

In an age where justice hinges on the accurate and careful evaluation of pieces of evidence and a set of testimony, the role of logical and rational reasoning, emotional appeal and character in influencing a decision or verdict becomes more

critical. This is done throughout the process of persuasion, that is, by the use of a persuasive language. According to(Perloff ,2017, p.5), persuasion is an intentional attempt to influence others through language and communication, to

change their beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors". (Najim,2012, p.2) indicates that language should be studied from different perspectives; this study asserts that persuasion is no less vital than other perspectives. (Ghanim,2025a, p.4) indicates that ideal language interlocutors use distinct wordings and expressions or strategies that support in persuading their addressees.

Persuasion becomes even more difficult within groups. The dynamics of group decision-making, particularly within the context of a jury trial, are nuanced and complex; 12 Angry Men (1957), the movie, provides a compelling exploration of such themes. One of the central figures in this movie is Juror 8, whose highly planned and methodical approach to challenging an initial guilty verdict to not guilty deserves attention. Through his logical arguments, ethical appeal and empathetic demeanor, Juror 8 ultimately succeeds to make the group reconsider the validity of the evidence. This paper is going to explore the effectiveness of Juror 8's methodological approach in persuading the jury to change their verdict, examining the structure of each argument presented and their overlapping with the rhetorical strategies of logos, ethos, and pathos. The discussion will also critically assess whether his reasoning holds up to scrutiny or not, whether the emotional appeal plays a role in strengthening his arguments or not, and whether his credibility (and some others') influences the effectiveness of the claims and the overall outcome. Therefore, this paper will demonstrate that Juror 8's effectiveness of methods stems from his strategic structuring of each argument in addition to the methodological use of rhetorical appeals, his ability to challenge initial assumptions, and his anti-bias tendency and commitment to justice. This is achieved by means

of adopting Toulmin's (1958) model and Aristotle's Rhetorical Theory.

1. Argumentation Theory and Group Persuasion

Argumentation is a wide-range topic that has a longstanding heritage in philosophy and many other areas reaching back to the 5th century B.C. It has been shaped by collective effort and in different eras until academically defining an identity of its own in the end of the 20th century (Hampe, 2005, p.1).

Argumentation as a theory is best defined by Van Eemeren et al.(1996, p. 1-5) as:

Argumentation is a verbal and social activity of reason aimed at increasing [or decreasing] the acceptability of a controversial standpoint for the listener or reader, by putting forward a constellation of propositions intended to justify [or refute] the standpoint before a rational judge

Brooks and Warren (1949, p.141) define argumentation as a form of discourse aimed at persuasion. In other words, its purpose is to convince the other party or audience to act in alignment with the arguer's intentions. Therefore, argumentation is a process in which the primary objective is to persuade others.

To persuade a group is a more complex process than persuading an individual arguer. Group persuasion requires influencing the attitudes, beliefs and/or behaviors of people within a group setting. The Persuasive Arguments Theory (PAT) suggests that people within group argumentations tend to adopt positions that sound more extreme than those they might hold individually. This is because group discussions expose each individual with a wider-range of evidence and reasoning

which makes them take more polarized attitudes (Johnson and Killeen, 1983, p.1114). Further, both processes, individual and group persuasion, rely heavily on the use of language; this means that clarity and precision are important, but, as (Nadar, 1998 cited in Hammed, 2025, p.523) indicates, ambiguity is often an inherent characteristic of language components, which should be carefully manipulated.

2. Persuasion and Rhetoric in Legal and Jury Contexts

In legal contexts, both in jury deliberations and courtrooms, persuasion plays a vital role. Lawyers (both sides), judges, and jurors employ persuasive techniques to sway opinions by interpreting evidence, and reach verdicts within diverse-opinioned group of people. This process is even more complex as the jury context is unique for several reasons:

1. Jurors make decisions even if information is limited, following the “beyond a reasonable doubt” standard.
2. Jurors apply structured rules and legal instructions, which influence their interpretation of the case. Lind and Tyler (1988, p.112) state that “In criminal cases, the jury is required to reach a decision based on the principle of reasonable doubt, which can be subjective and vary from one juror to another. The unique weight of this concept is a central feature of the jury's deliberation process”
3. Jurors are a community of non-experts who drive their interpretation and build their understanding of evidence on the base of common sense and general life experience. Ideal language users, however as Ghanim

(2025, p.1819) states it, use different wordings or phrases to communicate what they believe, and “this use is not alike due to distinct scientific levels” or individual differences in communication. This variability in expressing opinions further influences the way jurors interpret the evidence, as their understanding and interpretation are shaped by their own language and cognitive frameworks. (Pennington and Hastie 1992, p.222) indicate that laypersons find it more persuasive and comprehensible to view an incident in a frame consisting of a simple begging, middle and end scenario. This shallow view might form a challenge to cases less evident in details.

4. Jurors are supposed to face ethical and moral dilemmas; they are supposed to ignore personal prejudice and biases to deliver a fair decision and verdict. Personal bias and prejudice shapes a serious threat on the case. (Sommers and Norton, 2006, p.644)
5. Emotional pressure weighs the duty and makes the process of persuasion more intense. The unique weight of the rule of “reasonable doubt” exposes jurors emotions to pressure.

3. Aristotle's Rhetorical Theory

Aristotle, as cited in (Herrick 2009, p.48-49), identifies three primary pillars of persuasion. Each of these pillars targets a distinctive aspect of human reasoning and response in the process of argumentation and persuasion. These are:

1. **Ethos:** it refers to the appeal to credibility and ethics. It works on establishing the speaker's trustworthiness, moral character and sincerity. This makes the argument effectively received as humans by nature are more likely to accept

a piece of argument if the one said it is perceived as reliable and sincere.

2. **Pathos** : it covers the appeal to emotion. This one targets the audience's feelings and emotions. Eliciting emotional responses motivates fresh actions or shifted attitudes.
3. **Logos**: it deals with the appeal to reason. Aristotle asserts that persuasion through logos involves presenting sound reasoning, factual information, clear arguments, and supporting evidence. It is the employment of intellectual abilities.

4. Toulmin's Model of Argumentation

Philosopher Stephen E. Toulmin developed his method of argumentation on a model of law in which: (i) a claim is made by a person, then (ii) grounds are given to support that claim, and (iii) a warrant is provided to back the grounds. These three elements, namely claim, grounds, and warrant, are said to be basic elements in every argument. However, three additional elements are distinguished in Toulmin's model which are: backing, rebuttal and qualifier. These elements are added whenever it is necessary while the former three, the claim, its grounds and its warrant, are defined as the primary element (Karbach,1987, p.81).

Toulmin (1958, p.91-92) provides further details on each of these elements:

1. The Claim – the statement or assertion or conclusion that the arguer hopes to prove and aims to be accepted by the audience. The claim is defined by carefully checking the arguer's position, whether indicated explicitly or implicitly.
2. The Ground: it is the evidence or the foundation or the fact that proves or supports the claim.
3. The Warrant: it is the reasonable, logical and factual connection between the claim and its ground (ibid, p.95).
4. The Backing: it is the support provided to the warrant. It works on making the warrant more reasonably and logically connected to the claim. It works on showing that the reasonable connection between the warrant and claim is valid (Toulmin,1958, p.96).
5. The Qualifier: it is the explanation of the strength and certainty of the claim. It is figured out from the words and expressions that place specific limits on the claim (ibid, p.97).
6. The Rebuttal: it is around acknowledging the opposing arguments. It covers the challenging arguments to the claim. This is important to decide the gaps that might lead to the failure of the claim (ibid, p.98-99)

5. Mapping Aristotle's Rhetorical Pillars into Toulmin's Model: The Study Model

Although the focal points of Aristotle's theory and Toulmin's model may vary, with Aristotle emphasizing reasoning (logos), emotion (pathos), and credibility (ethos), and Toulmin concentrating primarily on (reasoning) logos, mapping Aristotle's rhetorical elements onto Toulmin's elements proves to be both crucial and productive, offering a complementary relationship between classical and modern theories of argumentation and, thus, valuable insights to such studies.

The kind of integrations this study suggests is as follows:

1. The rhetorical pillar of logos is supposed to correspond with the model in general and the two elements the claim and ground is specific.
2. The rhetorical pillar of ethos is expected to perfectly correlate with the two elements of warrant and backing. This is because the credibility of the speaker is a crucial element in enhancing the strength and effectiveness of the claim.
3. The rhetorical pillar of pathos aligns with the elements of qualifier and rebuttal. This is because emotion works on stimulating people to view arguments with greater urgency and establishes more certainty.

This sort of integration underscores the perpetual relevance of Aristotle's insights into human persuasion in various contexts and highlights the Toulmin model's effectiveness in grasping and analyzing complex argumentative structures. Therefore, the current study is going to establish this integration as the study model.

6. Twelve Angry Men

Twelve Angry Men (1957) is a classical American dramatic film of courtroom. It is directed by Sidney Lumet; the film is based on a teleplay by

Reginald Rose. The movie is entirely set in one setting, one room. The focus on the movie is on the deliberations of a jury trying to decide the fate of a very young man accused of his father's murder. The movie, as critics indicate, offers a profound exploration of prejudice, honesty, justice, and the power of logical and reasoned argumentation (Larson, n.d)

The plot of the movie revolves around the deliberations of twelve juries in a murder trial. The defendant, who is very young, is accused of murdering his father, so a guilty verdict leads to a death sentence. In the initial vote which directly followed the trial, all jurors, except for the Juror 8, vote guilty. Juror 8 is the only one to doubt the case's evidence. Therefore, he asks for a discussion. Juror 8's calm and reasonable approach has gradually affected the others to reconsider their initial votes and judgments.

This study will primarily focus on Juror 8's arguments and the few supporting arguments that led to the reconsideration of the guilty verdict. The analysis will concentrate solely on the parts of the dialogue that contributed to the shift from an 11-1 guilty vote to a 12-0 not guilty vote. Below a general overview on the characters of each of the 12 jurors (Madison School, n.d): as shown in Table (1).

Table (1): Characters in 12 Angry Men

No.	Jurors	Character and personality
1	Foreman	serious; well dressed; makes good decisions but not assertive enough; organized; gets affected by the opinions of the majority
2	Juror 2	Shy; passive; easily swayed by others; no strong opinion of his own
3	Juror 3	Strong; forceful; strict; forces his opinion; struggles with personal issues regarding his son, biased
4	Juror 4	Composed; fact-driven; believes in reason; with a sense of detachment
5	Juror 5	Takes his obligations (responsibility) seriously; young; hesitant to speak out, but

		knowledgeable about the case and his background.
6	Juror 6	Honest; nice; reliable; not the brightest person but makes decisions carefully; values reasoning and fairness.
7	Juror 7	Loud; quick temper; very opinionated ; bully; coward; quick opinions on things he knows nothing about; not interested in the case; interested in leaving the room as soon as possible
8	Juror 8	Calm; persistent; confident; highly values justice and fairness; against bias; questions others' assumptions; encourages critical thinking
9	Juror 9	Wise; an elderly man who values justice; compassionate; initially quiet but offers thoughtful insights
10	Juror 10	Prejudiced; angry; miserable; bitter; hates everyone but himself; knows his life is going nowhere
11	Juror 11	Humble; a refugee who values justice due to his own experiences with unfair treatment; wants justice.
12	Juror 12	Egocentric, snobbish; often self-absorbed; disconnected from the group's concerns; not particularly insightful but tries to be a good person.

7. Data Analysis

Before establishing a detailed analysis of the set of arguments with which Juror 8 leads the jury toward a complete change in the verdict, namely from 11-1 guilty to 12-0 not guilty, it is crucial to set the exact context of the trial. In other words, the set of evidence on which the 11 jurors based their decision on should be known. So, the primary pieces of evidence presented against the defendant are as follows:

1. The switch knife: (a) claimed to be a very unique weapon the defendant admitted to owning , and (b) its connection to the nature of the wound.
2. The testimony of the old man: (a) claiming to have heard the defendant threaten his father –

by saying “I will kill you”- and (b) witness defendant fleeing the scene.

3. The testimony of the old woman: Alleging to have seen the defendant murder his father as she looked out while lying in bed, i.e. by chance and from a distance

On the base of the above five pieces of main and sub-evidence, the eleven juror initially decided to claim the guilty verdict. However, a transformation has occurred leading to change the stance to 12 not guilty verdicts. The following Figure (1) depicts the stages and the approaches of the process of verdict change from guilty to not guilty:

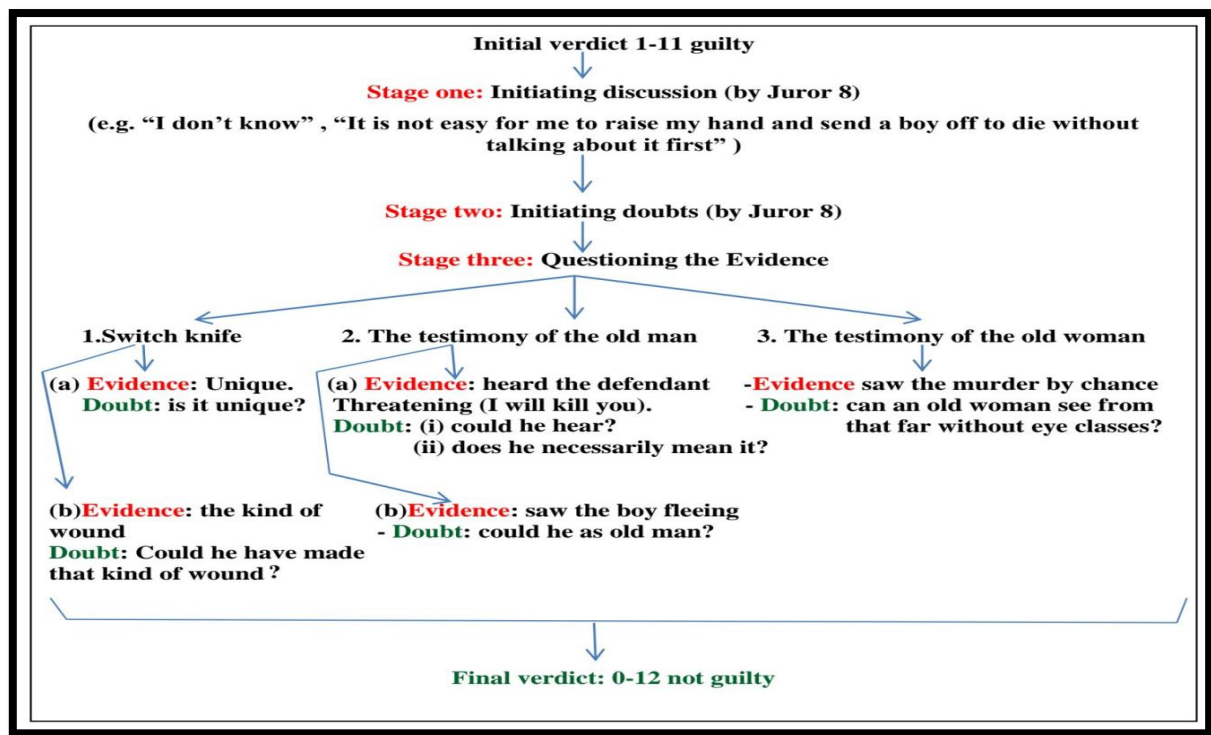


Figure (1): Argumentation Process in 12 Angry Men

Accordingly, the analysis of the rhetorical strategies and the dynamics of persuasion will focus only on the arguments presented in stage three where the set of evidence is questioned. Also, each piece of evidence is going to be analysed separately regardless of its chronological order in the movie. Below is the analysis:

The First Evidence: The switch knife: This relates to two pieces of evidence:

Evidence 1: the switch knife is claimed to be a very unique weapon the defendant admitted to owning:

“NO. 8: All right. Let's talk about it. Let's get it in here and look at it. I'd like to see it again, Mr. Foreman

(NO. 8 reaches casually into his pocket and withdraws an object. No one notices this. He stands up quietly.)

NO. 8: I'm not trying to make anyone accept it. I'm just saying it's possible.

(NO. 8 swiftly flicks open the blade of a switch knife and jams it into the table next to the first one. They are exactly alike. There are several gasps and everyone stares at the knife. There is a long silence.)

NO. 8: I got it last night in a little junk shop around the corner from the boy's house. It cost two dollars.”

These series of speeches contribute to one moment and, thus, they need to be treated as one piece of argument doubting the uniqueness of the weapon, “*I got it last night in a little junk shop around the corner from the boy's house. It cost two dollars*”.

So, the structure of this argument is as follows:

- The claim: “The knife is not unique”
- The grounds: Juror 8 introduces in a sudden a second knife- perfectly identical, stating it is easily acquired for a small price at a near local shop.

- The warrant: Since the uniqueness of the knife is a key element in the case, it casts real doubt on that it is found to be not unique.

- The backing: (i) such knives do not certainly link the boy to the crime as it is highly available and not rare. Additionally, (ii) the surprise in jurors reaction is a kind of backing.

-The qualifier: juror 8 only talks about the existence of a probable doubt, not a certain one: "I'm not trying to make anyone accept it. I'm just saying it's possible"

-The rebuttal: only one juror changed his vote to "not guilty" and the majority preferred the rebuttal "a pretty incredible coincidence".

The above structure shows that the claim is a reasonable suggestion challenging the initial claim that "the knife is unique" and, thus, the weapon necessarily belongs to the boy. Therefore, Juror 8 starts his persuasive move by trying to make other jurors consider the fact that the knife is not necessarily the one the boy once had, via an appeal by logos.

Ethos plays a central role with the element of warrant, and it was the essential reason why one of the jurors changed his vote. Although there was a chance that the knife was really the boy's, one of the jurors was affected by the calm and logical personality of Juror 8 and his sincerity towards the case. Moreover, backing is also received from the same juror by means of touching his emotions, i.e., by confidently establishing pathos.

Evidence 2: the switch knife's connection to the nature of the wound is another topic.

"NO.2: (hesitantly). Well, something's been bothering me a little . . . this whole business about the stab wound and how it was made, the downward angle of it, you know?

NO. 2: I know they did—but I don't go along with it. The boy is five feet eight inches tall. His father was six two. That's a difference of six inches. It's a very awkward thing to stab down into the chest of someone who's half a foot taller than you are.

NO. 3: All right. There's your angle. Take a look at it. Down and in. That's how I'd stab a taller man in the chest, and that's how it was done. Take a look at it and tell me I'm wrong.

NO. 8: All right. I want to ask you something. The boy was an experienced knife fighter. He was even sent to reform school for knifing someone, isn't that so?

NO. 5: In my back yard, on my stoop, in the vacant lot across the street, too many of them. Switch knives came with the neighborhood where I lived. Funny I didn't think of it before. I guess you try to forget those things. (Flicking the knife open) Anyone who's ever used a switch knife would never have stabbed downward. You don't handle a switch knife that way. You use it underhanded.

NO. 8: Then he couldn't have made the kind of wound, which killed his father.

NO. 5: No, he couldn't have. Not if he'd ever had any experience with switch knives"

In these set of speeches, where for the first time one of the juror's starts to raise a doubt and support juror 8, there is a main argument that reads as: could the boy have made that kind of wound? - This argument is critically examined through three sub-arguments, which are:

(i) *"It's a very awkward thing to stab down into the chest of someone who's half a foot taller than you are"* :

-The claim : It seems logically like the boy could not have made the kind of wound in his father's

chest because it would have been very difficult and impractical for him, given the height difference.

-The ground: the victim is “half a foot taller” than the boy, making it physically difficult to stab downward into the chest. This fact suggests a possible challenge in the way the wound is made.

- The warrant: Given the difference in height and the wound kind, it is physically impractical for a shorter boy to stab downward at such an angle into the chest of a taller man. So, the boy's state and the mechanism of stabbing make it logically improbable for him to have been made the wound.

- The backing: This argument is supported by two things: (i) the logical human anatomy and the physical laws of body mechanism, and (ii) juror 2's agreement.

- The qualifier: The claim is indicating probability (“very awkward”), that is, it is not referring to a complete certainty.

- The rebuttal: an argument presented by juror 3, who is inexperienced with switch knife using which makes his argument not effective for the lack of ethos.

The main base of this argument is on logos because it hovers around a fact related to human body and its physics. However, since it only refers to probability, the role of pathos is vital as well within the two elements of qualifier and rebuttal. Juror 2, who initiated the argument, emotionally urges everyone to think in a fair way and avoid unjust rebuttals.

(ii) “*The boy was an experienced knife fighter*”:

-The claim: The boy is an experienced knife user; with his skills, he wouldn't have inflicted the wound in the way it is described.

-The ground: The assertion is that the boy's experience with knife fighting gives him the knowledge and physical ability to make a different

kind of wound, taking their tall difference into consideration.

-The warrant: a skilled switch knife user would have precise techniques and control when using it. This suggests that the boy is supposed to make a wound in a manner that fits his expertise, which in turn would not ever match the kind of wound seen in the victim.

-The backing: This claim is supported by : (a) the knowledge about how experienced people use knife (which juror 5 later proves) and (b) the previous argument on tall difference and human anatomy.

-The qualifier: the claim is strong. It is asserted via simple tense highlighting factual information.

-The rebuttal: in case this is the only evidence, which is not, a probable rebuttal is that anyone can ignore their experience if they want. However, the case proved that the boy was not in a mental comfort that supports him to plan his actions.

In this argument, there are three rhetorical appeals, logos, ethos and pathos. The main base is logos as the kind of wound in relation to experience is a reasoning statement. Also, ethos plays a vital role within the warrant and the backing, but with relation to the boy. The boy is proved to be an experienced switch knife user. That is, his ethos with this regard supports the claim. Further, pathos plays a role in the way each juror views the boy, i.e. whether they view him as cool-bolded person that planned a whole murder (which makes them be harsh with their rebuttals) or a boy who might or might not kill his father accidentally as a result of sudden fight.

(iii) “*Anyone who's ever used a switch knife would never have stabbed downward.*”

-The claim: Since the stab is downward, the boy could not have made it.

- The ground: Anyone who is familiar with how to use a switch knife, like the defendant, would have more control over it and would likely stab in a different manner.
- The warrant: Experienced switch knife users would absolutely avoid stabbing downward.
- The backing: the previous two arguments work as logical backing and the agreement of three jurors (2, 5 and 8) on the same point is another backing too, specifically as one of them is being an experienced switch knife user.
- The qualifier: the claim asserts a strong defence, yet not completely absolute. It still refers to a probable logic.
- The rebuttal: once again, if this is the only evidence, which is not, a probable rebuttal is that anyone can ignore their experience if they want to. However, the case proved that the boy was not in a mental comfort that supports him to plan his actions.

With regard to the rhetorical pillars in the above argument, the idea is mainly logical. That is, the claim and the ground are indicating a reasonable and logical (logos) fact about using knives. However, ethos is a powerful element too when it comes to the warrant and the backing. The speaker builds trustworthiness and credibility by referring to himself as a knowledgeable person about the right use of a switch knife. This makes his warrant and backing even more persuasive because they are coming from an experience.

The Second Evidence: The testimony of the old man: this also includes two pieces of sub-evidence:

Evidence 1: the old man claims that he has heard the defendant threatening his father – by saying “I will kill you”- right before the murder occurs:

“NO. 8: (to NO. 4). Take a look at that sketch. How long does it take an elevated train going at top speed to pass a given point?

NO. 8: This. An el train passes a given point in ten seconds. That given point is the window of the room in which the killing took place. You can almost reach out of the window of that room and touch the el. Right? (Several of them nod.) All right. Now let me ask you this. Did anyone here ever live right next to the el tracks? I have. When your window is open and the train goes by, the noise is almost unbearable. You can't hear yourself think

NO. 8: The old man heard the boy say, "I'm going to kill you," and one second later he heard a body fall. One second. That's the testimony, right?

NO. 8: The woman across the street looked through the windows of the last two cars of the el and saw the body fall. Right? The last two cars.

NO. 8: An el takes ten seconds to pass a given point or two seconds per car. That el had been going by the old man's window for at least six seconds and maybe more, before the body fell, according to the woman. The old man would have had to hear the boy say, "I'm going to kill you," while the front of the el was roaring past his nose. It's not possible that he could have heard it.

NO. 8: Could he?

NO. 8: Now. There's something else I'd like to point out here. I think we proved that the old man couldn't have heard the boy say, "I'm going to kill you," but supposing he really did hear it? This phrase: how many times has each of you used it? Probably hundreds. "If you do that once more, Junior, I'm going to murder you." "Come on, Rocky, kill him!" We say it every day. This doesn't mean that we're going to kill someone.

NO. 8 : Well let me ask you this. Do you really think the boy would shout out a thing like that so

the whole neighborhood would hear it? I don't think so. He's much too bright for that."

In these speeches, juror 8 tries to doubt the first part of the old man's testimony, which is introduced as one of the most solid piece of evidence to claim the defendant guilty. His first argument (i) reads as *"Did anyone here ever live right next to the el tracks? I have. When your window is open and the train goes by, the noise is almost unbearable. You can't hear yourself think"*. The structure of this argument is as follows:

- The claim: The noise from the el train is almost unbearable, and you can't even hear yourself think.
- The ground: His experience about living next to the el tracks.
- The warrant: Anyone lives next to train track will experience the same things.
- The backing: Train noise is an undeniable general knowledge.
- The qualifier: The statement is certain. He, using simple tense and capability modality, exaggerates the idea to the degree "can't hear yourself think". However, the part related to "unbearable" is not certain because of the use of "almost".
- The rebuttal: the use of almost can introduce a challenge to the claim. That is, some people may get used by time to the noise.

This argument presents logos (the noise is extreme) but it is established mainly my means of ethos. The ground and the backing are totally built on ethos, the credibility of the speaker as someone who lived next to train tracks. So, without ethos, the warrant and the backing would have failed.

(ii) The second argument reads as *"An el takes ten seconds to pass a given point or two seconds per car. That el had been going by the old man's window for at least six seconds and maybe more, before the body fell, according to the woman. The*

old man would have had to hear the boy say, "I'm going to kill you," while the front of the el was roaring past his nose. It's not possible that he could have heard it" and it is structure is as follows:

- The claim: The old man could not have heard the boy because the noise of the train would have drowned it out.
- The ground: Counting the seconds it takes for a train to pass and examining the testimony of the other witness , namely the old woman, the train was passing by before the murder by at least six seconds which is supposedly the time the old man claims to hear the boy threatening his father and the noise of body fall right after.
- The warrant: Noises of a passing train would drown out any human sound.
- The backing: The testimony of the old woman whom indicated that the train was passing by at the time of the incident, specifically the final two cars of the train.
- The qualifier: The claim is strong, "impossible" while the assumption about the time is flexible, "six seconds and maybe more", which is a flexibility that works for the favor of the defendant.
- The rebuttal: a possible rebuttal to this claim is that the voice of the boy might be very loud and the man could hear it.

The argument is established by means of logos, ethos and pathos. Logos is apparent in the clear and strong representation of the logic of timing, sounds and train noises. The whole theory is reasonably explained. Further, the surprising focus and critical thinking of juror 8 about the small details pictures a positive image on his character, which is an establishment of ethos within the elements of warrant and backing. Presenting details gradually and carefully and in a calm and

thoughtful manner shows a high level of credibility in speaker's character. Further, the interest in such details indicates a high sense of justice and eagers emotionally others to reconsider their shallow and fast decision and thus restructure their rebuttals in the favor of the defendant.

(iii) The other argument reads as: *"Now. There's something else I'd like to point out here. I think we proved that the old man couldn't have heard the boy say, 'I'm going to kill you,' but supposing he really did hear it? This phrase: how many times has each of you used it? Probably hundreds. 'If you do that once more, Junior, I'm going to murder you.' 'Come on, Rocky, kill him!' We say it every day. This doesn't mean that we're going to kill someone."* . The structure is as follows:

-The claim: Saying "I'm going to kill you" does not necessarily mean that the speaker actually intends to kill someone.

- The ground: The assumption that people usually use this expression to indicate exaggerative anger is evidence. Examples are phrases like "If you do that once more, Junior, I'm going to murder you" or "Come on, Rocky, kill him!" . None of these implicate their literal meaning.

- The warrant: The expression "I'm going to kill you" is just a hyperbole used in everyday speech and neither corresponds to a real threat nor implicates its literal meaning.

-The backing: there are two backings to this claim: (i) the well-known social and linguistic norms that everyone adheres to, and (ii) the reaction of one of the jurors later when juror 8 intentionally teases him to make him shout "I will kill you" from anger. The second backing works as a solid support for the claim. .

-The qualifier: The claim is strong and certain which obvious from the use of: "probably

hundreds" and "every day". They indicate that the frequency of using such expression is high.

- The rebuttal: The boy still can be serious.

This argument is appealed by logos, ethos and pathos together. On the one hand, the representation of the claim and the ground is made by means of logical reasoning that people express their anger in a way that does not necessarily imply their actual intentions, specifically the socially well-known hyperbole of "I will kill you". The backing and the warrant, on the other hand, are established on the base of the personality of one of the other juror, whom juror 8 intentionally teased to get angry and yell "I will kill you" proving the probability of the claim. Pathos is seen in the manipulation of the teased juror's feeling, which led to the failure of their rebuttal.

(iv)The final argument on this evidence reads as *"Well let me ask you this. Do you really think the boy would shout out a thing like that so the whole neighborhood would hear it? I don't think so. He's much too bright for that."* Its structure is as follows:

-The claim: As the boy is intelligent enough, he wouldn't have shouted out a dangerous threat in a way that would be heard by the neighborhood.

- The ground: The boy is defined as "much too bright for that."

-The warrant: Any intelligent person would certainly avoid doing something that easily incriminates them.

-The backing: The general shared knowledge about human behavior and intelligence. So, the backing for this claim depends on the general principle that people avoid actions that may lead to their exposure and downfall.

- The qualifier: The speaker indicates that his claim is a personal point of view and it is up to the

jury to think critically about it or not, indicated from the use of “I don’t think so”.

- The rebuttal: a possible rebuttal, in case there is no other evident, can be : “what if the boy was emotional at the moment and was acting impulsively?”

Logos is the rhetorical strategy within this argument. The claim and the ground are reasonably established. They discuss the general fact that a person with intelligence would necessarily avoid making a decision that would lead to negative consequences. Further, ethos is seen the element of warrant as well. The reference to the boy’s character as an intelligent person is an establishment of trustworthiness in his character.

Evidence 2: the old man has witnessed defendant fleeing the scene.

“NO. 8: Did the old man say he ran to the door?”

NO. 8: Where was his bedroom again?

NO. 8: No. Mr. Foreman, I'd like to take a look at the diagram of the apartment.

NO. 8: We're not. We're going to find out how a man who's had two strokes in the past three years, and who walks with a pair of canes, could get to his front door in fifteen seconds.

NO. 8: (ignoring him). All right. This is the apartment in which the killing took place. The old man's apartment is directly beneath it and exactly the same. (Pointing) Here are the el tracks. The bedroom. Another bedroom. Living room. Bathroom. Kitchen. And this is the hall. Here’s the front door to the apartment. And here are the steps. (Pointing to front bedroom and then front door) Now, the old man was in bed in this room. He says he got up, went out into the hall, down the hall to the front door, opened it, and looked out just in time to see the boy racing down the stairs. Am I right?

NO. 8: Fifteen seconds after he heard the body fall.

NO. 8: His bed was at the window. It's (looking closer) twelve feet from his bed to the bedroom door. The length of the hall is forty-three feet, six inches. He had to get up out of bed, get his canes, walk twelve feet, open the bedroom door, walk forty-three feet, and open the front door—all in fifteen seconds. Do you think this possible?

NO. 8: I want to try this thing. Let's see how long it took him. I'm going to pace off twelve feet—the length of the bedroom. (He begins to do so.)

NO. 11: Thirty-one seconds

NO. 8: It's my guess that the old man was trying to get to the door, heard someone racing down the stairs, and assumed that it was the boy.”

These pieces of conversation between the jury discuss one main argument which is “*We're going to find out how a man who's had two strokes in the past three years, and who walks with a pair of canes, could get to his front door in fifteen seconds.*”. The structure of this argument is as follows:

-The claim: It is not possible for the old man, who has had two strokes and walks with a cane, to get to his front door in fifteen seconds.

-The grounds: there are three: (i)the old man has had two strokes and walks with two canes, (ii) the distance the old man had to cover was long for him, namely twelve feet from his bed to the bedroom door and forty-three feet down the hallway to the front door, and (iii) the calculation , made by juror 8, of the time it takes to walk such distance with the specific physical condition of the old man.

- The warrant: A person with specific physical limitations, namely two strokes and canes, cannot walk as quickly as the case requires covering the distance indicated.

- The backing : The demonstration of pacing out the distance and confirming that it takes 31 seconds to walk 12 feet in the bedroom, supporting the argument that the old man couldn't complete 55 feet in 15 seconds.

- The qualifier: juror 8 implies the impossibility of the situation based on his reasoning, "It's my guess".

-The rebuttal : The possibility that the old man is able to move faster than said, but the argument challenges this by saying that the old man's medical and physical condition makes it improbable. This means there is no obvious rebuttal.

Rational and logical reasoning is the absolute appeal in this argument, that is, the appeal is initiated by logos. However, the accurate demonstration of the rational reasoning (the physical impossibility of the old man to cover the given distance in the given time) is a practical example of a trustworthy character of the arguer. This means that the specific way of representing the backing and the warrant stands as an ethos strategy.

Third Evidence: The testimony of the old woman: Alleging to have seen the defendant murder his father as she looked out while lying in bed, i.e. by chance and from a distance.

"NO. 8: All right. Let's go over her testimony. What exactly did she say?

NO. 4: I believe I can recount it accurately. She said that she went to bed at about eleven o'clock that night. Her bed was next to the open window, and she could look out of the window while lying down and see directly into the window across the street. She tossed and turned for over an hour, unable to fall asleep. Finally she turned toward the window at about twelve ten and as she looked out,

she saw the boy stab his father. As far as I can see, this is unshakable testimony

NO. 6: Oh, I don't know. Look, this may be a dumb thought, but what do you do when you wake up at night and want to know what time it is?

NO. 2: What do you mean? I put on my glasses and look at the clock.

NO. 6: You don't wear them to bed.

NO. 8: Listen, she wasn't wearing them in bed. That's for sure. She testified that in the midst of her tossing and turning she rolled over and looked casually out the window. The murder was taking place as she looked out, and the lights went out a split second later. She couldn't have had time to put on her glasses. Now maybe she honestly thought she saw the boy kill his father. I say that she saw only a blur."

The central argument in this conversation is *"Listen, she wasn't wearing them in bed. That's for sure. She testified that in the midst of her tossing and turning she rolled over and looked casually out the window. The murder was taking place as she looked out, and the lights went out a split second later. She couldn't have had time to put on her glasses. Now maybe she honestly thought she saw the boy kill his father. I say that she saw only a blur."* The structure of this argument is as follows

-The claim: The old woman couldn't have seen the defendant kill his father because she didn't have time to put on her eye glasses and therefore she only saw a blur.

-The ground: In her testimony, the old woman said that she was tossing and turning in bed and then turned toward the window at around 12:10 a.m. to see the boy stabbing his father. However, the lights went out almost immediately afterward. Additionally as everyone confirmed, she was not

wearing her glasses while in bed. This provides the basis for challenging her ability to clearly see the incident.

-The warrant: Since the old woman was not wearing her glasses and , given her testimony details, did not have time to wear it in addition to not mentioning wearing it, her vision would have been blurry. It's a logical assumption that without corrective lenses, a person's ability to see clearly, especially in low light, would be severely impaired.

- The backing: the conversation between juror 6 and juror 2 about the inability of juror 2 to see the time without his eye glasses.

-The qualifier: In the argument, juror 8 states: "Maybe she honestly thought she saw the boy kill his father." This statement suggests that the claim is not presented as an absolute fact, but rather as a highly probable explanation for the woman's mistaken perception given the rational details presented.

-The rebuttal: no rebuttal is presented after this argument. The verdict is changed to 0-12 not guilty at this stage of argumentation.

The argument appeals logically the contrast between the testimony of the old woman and her reality. The core of the claim is the reasonable doubt that a person who wears eyeglasses would not be able to see clearly and accurately through a long distance. Further, the methodological approach to present the warrant and the backing provided the appeal by a touch of ethos which strengthened the acceptability of the claim.

8. Discussion

The focus of the discussion section is going to be on four dimensions:

1. The Overall Effectiveness: how effective is juror 8's approach to verdict change and his strategic use of arguments.
2. Reasoning Role: Does reasoning hold up to scrutiny or not? how?
3. Ethos Weight: Does ethos add up weight to the argument effectiveness? How?
4. Pathos Impact: Does pathos make the arguments more effective? How?

8.1. The Overall Effectiveness

As illustrated in Diagram 1 from the previous section (7. Data Analysis), the approach Juror 8 takes is based on the concept of guiding others to drive their own conclusions rather than forcing one on them. His method begins with the modest claims: "*I don't know*" and "*it is not easy for me to raise my hand and send a boy off to die without talking about it first.*" These two claims, which constructed stage one (initiating discussion), add effectiveness to his approach and pave the way for a fairer and critical examination of the case. He establishes a calm, patient, logical, and empathetic method to question each piece of evidence that initially considered as a solid base for the guilty verdict.

Throughout the discussions, Juror 8 never directly attacks evidence or arguments. Instead, he methodically questions the pieces of evidence presented; he gradually introduces doubts that ultimately lead the jury to reconsider the guilty verdict. He carefully constructs each of his claims with highly valid grounds and warrants. For example, when challenging the uniqueness of the knife, which the prosecution claims that it strongly links the boy to the crime, Juror 8 doesn't merely state his position; he does not even directly proves his claim; he demonstrates it by producing an identical knife after a short discussion, making his

argument more tangible. Similarly, when disputing the old man's testimony on hearing the boy flee, he carefully and passionately calculates the time it would take for the old man to cover the distance in his condition, effectively challenging the witness's version of the incident.

Juror 8 also, in a calm and planned manner, challenges the rebuttals of his peers by using their own prejudices against them. For instance, when one juror biasedly insists that the expression "*I will kill you*" is always an actual threat, Juror 8 intentionally provokes this juror into unintentionally and angrily repeating it, illustrating and proving how these sort of threats are often exaggerated (via hyperbole) and are not taken literally. In doing so, Juror 8 does not portray himself as an authoritarian figure; rather, he portrays himself as a seeker of truth, establishing a kind of cooperative and respectful atmosphere in the deliberations, which is something that raises the effectiveness of the arguments presented.

This approach works on multiple rhetorical levels: (i) on the reasonable level (an appeal by reason), (ii) on the empathic level (an appeal by ethos), and (iii) on the emotional level (an appeal by pathos). Accordingly, the switch in the argumentation process, triggered by Juror 8's position, shows how ethical reasoning, doubt, critical thinking, in addition to patience and respect, can prevail in the face of bias and prejudice.

8.2. Reasoning Role

Appeal by reason (logos) is the essential strategy in this context and any courtroom or jury context in general. However, to check whether reasoning in this case holds up to scrutiny requires a close examination of the validity and the reliability of the reasonable claims presented in the process of

argumentation. With regard to validity, the arguments presented by juror 8 are all valid and accepted as the verdict is finally changed. He successfully could present a second examination of each piece of evidence in a well-thought manner and clear line; he has been able to present an alternative perception for the evidence presented such as: the impossibility of reaching the front door by the old man in the given time, the impossibility of viewing a far distance by an old woman without eyeglasses, and the impossibility of hearing sounds while a train is passing by.

However, although all his arguments are valid and tangibly logical, they are not always reliable. Some of them are only based on assumptions, i.e. they are not certain. Assumptions only refer to probabilities. Regardless of the invalidity of some arguments, the end result is changed because in such contexts the existence of a reasonable doubt leads to the invalidity of the evidence.

8.3. Ethos Weight

The appeal by trustworthiness and credibility constructs the genuine element of juror 8's methodological strategy. It is his character that provoked the initial stage and the upcoming stages successfully. Juror 8 has started his appeal by presenting himself as a calm, thoughtful and trustworthy person. After that, he has been able to show everyone that he is an expertise in whatever he talks about in addition to his high sense of justice. He has proved for everyone that he is not interested in just winning an argument and being in a position of authority; rather, he is an empathic and fair person who is interested in justice. These qualifications in his character have made his arguments more compelling and allowed him to guiding the jury toward doubt and reconsideration of the presented evidence.

8.4. Pathos Impact

While the main focus is on logos and ethos, pathos increases effectiveness as well. The promotion for the ethical responsibility of jurors by juror 8 is a demonstration of an appeal by emotion. Arguments are humanized more by making other jurors realize that the wrongful decision in such cases lead someone off to die, which is not an easy decision to be made. This emotional tug has shifted the initial certainty to doubt.

9. Conclusion

In conclusion, Juror 8's structured approach to changing the jury's verdict in 12 Angry Men movie illustrates the power of reason, logic, trust, confident, and emotion in swaying perspectives. Through his appeal with logos, he successfully questioned the validity of each piece of evidence, providing rational counterpoints and alternatives that opened the door to reasonable doubt. While some of his arguments were merely based on assumptions rather than certainties, the existence of a mere reasonable doubt in legal contexts led to a shift in the jury's decision; this demonstrates the vital role of critical thinking in such contexts.

Juror 8's ethos, established through his confident, calm, thoughtful, deep and empathetic demeanor, strengthened the effectiveness and the credibility of his claims, allowing him to gradually earn the trust and the respect of his peers. Pathos, while not being the central appeal, added an emotional touch that humanized the state of the case, directing the jury attention to the moral responsibilities they are supposed to hold in deciding the fate of a boy.

Through a combination of logic, credibility, and emotional appeal, Juror 8 was able to dismantle the initial verdict and guide the jury towards a fairer and a more just judgment; so, logical reasoning exemplifies how effective, emotional and ethically

driven argumentation can prevail against prejudice and bias.

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